

AD-A168 892

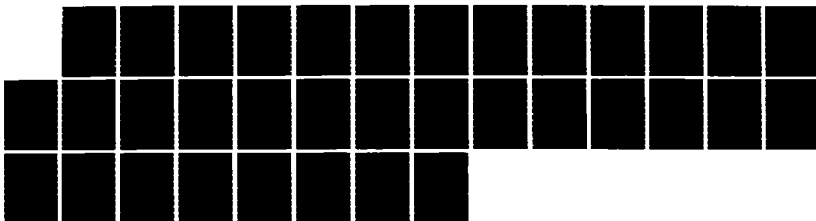
SOVIET STRATEGIC MILITARY INTERESTS IN AFRICA IN THE
1980'S(U) ARMY WAR COLL STRATEGIC STUDIES INST CARLISLE
BARRACKS PA R B RENNEK 01 MAY 86

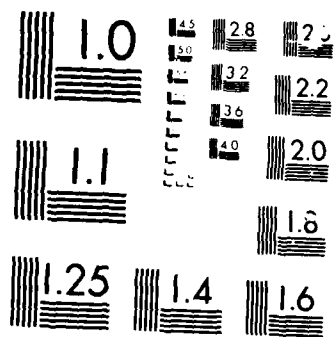
1/1

UNCLASSIFIED

F/G 5/4

NL





AD-A168 892

(2)

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013-5050

1 MAY 1986

ACN 86005

SOVIET STRATEGIC MILITARY INTERESTS IN AFRICA IN THE 1980s



Final Report

JUN 19 1986

ATTC FILE COPY

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT:
Approved for public release;
distribution unlimited.

The views, opinions, and/or findings contained in this report are those of the author and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation.

US ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Major General James E. Thompson, Commandant

* * * * *

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE

Director
Colonel Thomas R. Stone

Author
Richard B. Remnek

Editor
Mrs. Marianne P. Cowling

Secretary
Rita A. Rummel

* * * * *

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE

US ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013-5050

1 May 1986

ACN 86005

SOVIET STRATEGIC MILITARY INTERESTS IN AFRICA
IN THE 1980s

Final Report

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT:
Approved for public release;
distribution unlimited.

The views, opinions, and/or findings
contained in this report are those of
of the author and should not be
construed as an official Department of
the Army position, policy, or decision,
unless so designated by other official
documentation.

NOTICES

DISCLAIMER

The contents of this report represent the research and reasoning of the author and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other official documents.

COMMENTS

Comments pertaining to this study are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050.

Research on this study was completed in August 1985.

FOREWORD

This individual study was initiated by the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI). In the study, Dr. Richard B. Remnek identifies what role Africa--its territory, resources, and surrounding waters--may play in the Soviet peacetime preparation for, and prosecution of, a general coalition war as well as in regional crises outside Africa. This paper will contribute to understanding the nature of the Soviet threat to the West in Africa.

The author argues that although Soviet military interests in Africa have been limited, they have nevertheless worked to distort Soviet policy in the Horn of Africa during the past decade. He recommends that the focus of US concern about the Soviet military threat in Africa should be on African capabilities and intentions to support Soviet strategic bombing missions. In addition, he suggests that, when feasible, pressure should be applied to restrict Soviet development and use of African military facilities for strategic purposes.

The author appreciates the helpful comments of Colonel Robert J. Lilley of the US Army War College, and Mr. John F. Scott and Dr. Alan N. Sabrosky of SSI.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this study on this important national security issue.

Thomas R. Stone

THOMAS R. STONE
Colonel, FA
Director, Strategic Studies Institute



DISTRIBUTION	
Available to: []	
Dist	[]
A-1	[]

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

Dr. Richard B. Remnek is visiting research professor at the Strategic Studies Institute, on leave from Georgetown University. He has served as deputy director of the Georgetown University Russian Area Studies Program at the US Army Russian Institute, Garmisch, Germany, as a research analyst at the Center for Naval Analyses, and as a senior research fellow, Air University Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research and Education. He is the author of Soviet Scholars and Soviet Foreign Policy: A Case Study of Soviet Policy Towards India (1975) and editor of Social Scientists and Policy Making with the USSR (1977). He has also written numerous articles and book chapters on Soviet politico-military affairs.

SOVIET STRATEGIC MILITARY INTERESTS IN AFRICA IN THE 1980s

The marked expansion of Soviet activities in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade has been interpreted by some observers as a strategic threat to the West. According to this view, during a major war the Soviets would employ African facilities to attack NATO forces, installations and other targets from the flanks, interdict at sea the supplies of Persian Gulf oil that reach Europe and the United States along routes astride the coasts of Africa, and deny the West access to African sources of chromium, cobalt, manganese, and platinum--strategic minerals with important military-industrial applications. These ulterior strategic motives, so this argument goes, underlie Soviet policy in Africa. Is this perception of a Soviet strategic threat in Africa realistic or distorted? And if distorted, to what extent?

The purpose of this study is to examine critically this threat assessment by attempting to identify specific Soviet strategic military interests in and around Africa and suggesting how they may have affected the thrust of Soviet policy in the area in the past and might affect it in the future. Finally, I shall try to clarify what should be the focus of Western concerns about Soviet military strategy there. In this study, the term strategic is used in its narrow, military sense. The focus here is on identifying what role Africa--its resources, territory, and surrounding waters--may play in the Soviet peacetime preparation for and prosecution of a major war.

There are several reasons to assume that a major war would not start in Africa even though opportunities for foreign intervention will be numerous, given the unstable conditions there. One assumes that for a superpower to engage in armed combat with the other superpower, and hence risk escalation of the conflict into global war, the values at stake would have to be large indeed. Yet, the tangible interests of the superpowers in Africa are less than vital. A major object of Western interests is strategic minerals. Though they are critically important to Western defense production,¹ the West is far less vulnerable to supply disruptions than it is to Persian Gulf oil cutoffs.

Compare, for example, the vastly differing impacts caused by the 1978 Shaba intervention on cobalt supplies--a four-fold increase in cobalt prices--and the 1979 Iranian Islamic revolution, which triggered major oil shortages in the United States. In a major war, strategic mineral stockpiles would be relied upon to cushion the impact of any possible supply disruptions.² Although questions about the adequacy of US strategic mineral stockpiles have been raised,³ these stockpiles are nevertheless far larger and more reliable than the US strategic petroleum reserves whose combustibility makes them more vulnerable to sabotage.

Moreover, the less than vital interests that are at stake are not likely to push the superpowers onto a collision course. Africa does not contain a pivotal state like Iran, which touches on the vital interests of both superpowers--in the north, along the USSR's Moslem borderlands and in the south, along the Persian Gulf. Both superpowers have interests to protect in Africa, but the geographic focal points of those interests are distant

from each other. The West's economic interests focus on access to South Africa's minerals, Zaire's cobalt and Nigeria's oil. Moscow's primary interest in the security of its southern sea route gives it a stronger strategic stake in the Horn of Africa. (Here Moscow's concern for the safety of maritime passage through the Red Sea, Bab el Mandeb and Gulf of Aden converges with that of other major users, including European nations and Israel.)

Finally, it's worth adding that the superpowers have not needed to employ their own combat forces to pursue their interests in Africa, and, given the limited interests at stake, it seems highly improbable that they would want to employ their own forces in the future. Thus, Africa is not likely to become the venue for World War III.

Nevertheless, Africa could play a role in a major war fought primarily outside that continent, on a scale either worldwide or limited to a specific military theater (e.g., Europe or Southwest Asia). In this paper, therefore, I shall consider war scenarios around the periphery of Africa (i.e., a NATO/Warsaw Pact war and a superpower conflict in Southwest Asia) and outside the African periphery (e.g., a Sino-Soviet conflict).

For the purpose of this discussion, I have assumed that a major war would be fought by conventional means and over a protracted period, measured in months and perhaps years. This choice is recommended by Soviet doctrinal evidence which suggests that Moscow has recently introduced an independent option for a conventional, protracted war.⁴ The Soviets evidently now believe they have sufficient capabilities to fight a coalition war on a global scale and by conventional means, without necessarily escalating to the nuclear level. They do not believe, as they did in the 1960s when they had only an all-out nuclear war option, that a war would necessarily be a short one. As Moscow shifted to a limited nuclear war doctrine in the 1970s, and then to a conventional war option in the 1980s, a longer war perspective was adopted.⁵ In addition, as part of this shift to a conventional option, the Soviets have upgraded the anti-SLOC (Sea Lines of Communication) mission.⁶ This shift in Soviet military thinking may have important implications for the strategic significance of Africa in Soviet eyes.

The following discussion is based partly on extrapolation from the current state of military technology. Only those weapons systems either in service or coming into service over the next few years are considered. Consequently, discussion speaks to the present and near term future. It does not take into account technological advances, such as the US Strategic Defense Initiative or a possible Soviet breakthrough in submarine detection,⁷ which are likely to generate major changes in military strategy in the future. This may have a significant impact on the strategic military role of Africa, but in ways that cannot be foreseen at present.

Implications of Peacetime Soviet Naval Operations in Africa

What connection does the military presence in and around the African continent today have with Soviet preparation for a major war? To answer this question we should start by recognizing that the Soviet military

presence there is largely for reasons of state that have little to do with preparations for a major war. The naval forces deployed off the coasts of Sub-Saharan Africa perform primarily politico-military missions, ranging from the protection of Soviet state interests, such as the hundred or more Soviet civilian vessels that are to be found in the Indian Ocean on any given day,⁸ to the implementation of Soviet foreign policy objectives in the Third World. Indeed, the Soviet Navy has become a major instrument in Moscow's diplomacy of force in the Third World. This applies even to the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. With the US replacement of Polaris with Trident SSBNs, the strategic importance of the Mediterranean as a US SSBN patrol area has declined. Whatever role the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron may have once played in strategic defense of the Soviet homeland against US SSBNs has diminished accordingly.

How the Soviet naval forces around Africa are employed in peacetime does not tell us much about how they might be employed in a major war. To a considerable degree it depends upon how the West employs its deployed naval forces. For example, should US forces be withdrawn from the Mediterranean or Indian Ocean, say during a crisis leading to a Soviet attack concentrated along the central European front, the Soviets might pull their forces out of those areas too if they felt no alternative objectives were worth targeting there. The basic point is that Soviet forces deployed around Africa in peacetime may not be there in wartime. All that can be safely asserted is that these forces are peacetime instruments of Soviet diplomacy whose wartime roles are highly scenario-dependent.

Because the wartime roles of Soviet naval forces deployed around Africa are uncertain, African states can more easily support the Soviet Navy simply on the grounds that it serves political objectives that are compatible with their own foreign policies. Supporting a local Soviet naval presence often directly serves the security interests of an access donor. These donors are hence indirect beneficiaries of the naval support they render.

However, in supporting the Soviet Navy they are doing more than serving their own interests. By facilitating the Soviet Navy's performance of politico-military missions, access donors make it easier for the Soviet Navy to perform other missions, including those of strategic value. Ready access to local port facilities, where repairs that cannot be performed satisfactorily at sea can be made, and where crew rest and direct logistic support are available,⁹ has enabled the Soviet Navy to support forward deployed combatants with fewer support vessels and to prolong combatant deployments significantly. For example, prior to gaining extensive access to facilities at Berbera in 1972, the average Soviet warship deploying to the Indian Ocean stayed there for roughly five months; in 1973 Soviet combatant deployments to the Indian Ocean lasted around a year.¹⁰

Lengthening combatant deployments has important operational advantages. First, it reduces the overall proportion of time wasted by Soviet warships in transit from home bases to forward operating areas. In some cases these reductions were substantial. For example, in the 1970s (i.e., before the Soviet Indian Ocean Squadron began to make occasional use of Vietnam's facilities for enroute logistic and maintenance support), it took Soviet naval units approximately three weeks with normal transit speeds of 10-12

knots to reach the Gulf of Aden, their normal Indian Ocean operating area at that time, from their Vladivostok home port (a distance of 6700 nm). Prior to 1973, when Soviet naval deployments in the Indian Ocean averaged five months, to keep one combatant on station continuously in the Gulf of Aden Soviet warships spend roughly four months per year in transit. By more than doubling the length of combatant deployments in 1973, the Soviets were able to cut the amount of transit time by more than half.

Second, lengthening deployments gives the Soviet Navy the ability to meet their force requirements with a smaller inventory of ships, thereby reducing overall operating costs as well as freeing units for other assignments. To be sure, only some of the general purpose forces the Soviets deploy forward, such as submarines and the more modern, missile-capable surface combatants, could be used effectively to perform higher priority missions of strategic significance elsewhere. Other units have very limited combat capabilities and are therefore well suited to the performance of relatively nondemanding "state interest" missions in the Third World and little else. This applies particularly to the older combatants, such as 900-ton T-58-class patrol ships and 1,100 ton Petya-class frigates which were introduced into service when the Soviets had only a day-sailing navy. Indeed, the Soviets appear to have risked Indian Ocean deployments for the Petyas, whose small size and low endurance make them ill-suited for open ocean operations,¹¹ only after they gained routine access to Berbera.¹² The ready availability of local support facilities appears to have enabled them to prolong the useful service of warships which might otherwise have been scrapped.

Besides the assistance the Soviets have received that has enabled them to economize on forward deployments of their more combat-capable warships, in some instances they have been able to use foreign shipyards for the repair and overhaul of combatants and auxiliary vessels. In Africa alone, they used Egypt's Al-Gabbari shipyards for this purpose until April 1976, and to a limited extent since then, Tunisia's Menzel Bourguiba shipyards.¹³ By "farming out" repair work, the Soviets can free to some extent their own busy shipyards for other work, including work on ships that have important war-related missions.

Soviet use of African support facilities other than those located in ports is also important. The Soviets have staged routine surveillance flights from airfields in Egypt (until 1972), Guinea (until 1977), Somalia (until 1977), Angola (since 1977), Ethiopia (from 1979 to 1984),¹⁴ and Libya (since 1981).¹⁵ Most often, the Soviets have used in this role Il-38 May ASW planes, whose limited range does not permit them to do much more than aerial surveillance in support of deployed naval forces. However, the Soviets have also staged long-range Tu-95 Bear-D maritime reconnaissance aircraft, mostly from West African airfields.¹⁶ This has afforded the USSR surveillance coverage of Western naval forces over large expanses of the Atlantic Ocean remote from Africa. For example Tu-95 Bear-Ds staging from Luanda, Angola, during the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas conflict conducted limited surveillance of British naval forces en route to Ascension Island.¹⁷ Bear-Ds are also capable of providing targeting data for sea-launched cruise missiles--a valuable asset in peacetime naval exercises as well as in wartime (should, of course, the Bear-Ds survive long enough to

provide the data). The long range and combat capabilities of the Bears suggest that their reconnaissance flights from West Africa can serve strategic as well as politico-military missions.

Though not exhaustive, this list of naval support services rendered by African states includes those with clearly identified strategic implications.¹⁸ In general, this support helps the Soviet Navy prepare for a major war indirectly and only to a minor extent.

Do Soviet Arms Sales Have Strategic Military Advantages?

The growing volume of Soviet arms transfers to Africa in recent years raises the question of whether these sales reduce average arms production costs. A look at the available data suggests that Soviet arms sales to Africa do not seem large enough to have had much impact on lowering military production costs. During the 5-year period that ended in 1982, the USSR transferred to Africa \$14 billion worth of arms--approximately one-third of the total value of arms the Soviets delivered to the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America during that period.¹⁹ Of that \$14 billion, \$6 billion went to Libya and \$3.2 billion to Algeria, mostly in the form of purchases of modern weapons. Energy-resource rich Algeria and Libya, however, are among the few African states capable of paying cash for weapons. Most, if not all, of the other recipients of Soviet weapons probably obtain them through credits or grants.²⁰ And the opportunities for the Soviets to expand their list of cash customers for arms in Africa seems rather limited at present. Finally, the \$9.2 billion worth of weapons the Soviets delivered to Algeria and Libya during 1978-82 represents less than one-tenth of one percent of the amount (measured in current 1982 dollars) they are estimated to have spent on their own military expenditures during this period. The impact of Soviet arms sales to Africa on military production costs would therefore seem to be insignificant.²¹ From an economic perspective, arms transfers, particularly to Libya, have been far more important primarily as an earner of foreign exchange, and secondarily as a means of disposing of outmoded or expendable weapons systems, such as MiG-25 Foxbat As. which were developed to meet a high-altitude aerial threat--the B-70 bombers--that never materialized.²²

The Role of Africa in the Soviet Prosecution of a Major Conventional War

If the strategic military benefits the Soviets derive in peacetime from their activities in and around Africa are indirect and very limited, how important might Africa be in the actual Soviet prosecution of major war? Most answers to this question have been based simply on extrapolations of Soviet capabilities which are scenario-independent and pay scant regard to the combat mission priorities and assessments of relative military capabilities that will determine how Soviet combat assets are employed.

The strategic military importance of Africa to the USSR in wartime has been seen generally in two connections: first, warships deployed around Africa would interdict oil tankers from the Persian Gulf; and second, the USSR would stage strike aircraft from African airfields to conduct a flank attack on NATO forces and installations in NATO's southern region, and on

transatlantic convoys of reinforcements and resupplies. Only the second thesis has currency among informed observers.

The USSR and the Interdiction of Oil Supplies

The reason that the first lacks credibility has nothing to do with the capabilities of deployed Soviet naval forces. Even the most antiquated and least combat-capable of the warships the Soviets deploy off the coasts of Africa can disable a tanker, but so, too, can a terrorist firing an RPG from an Arab dhow. The point here is that tankers are highly vulnerable to attack. In fact, one wonders whether, if for no other reason than skyrocketing maritime insurance costs, tankers would put into the nearest protected port during a crisis leading to war and would not return to the sea lanes without naval escort or before the Soviets had been swept from the seas.

This does not mean that our Persian Gulf oil supplies would be safe in war. They would not be. Rather, the most efficient and potentially effective way the Soviets could interdict the flow of oil to the West would be through sabotage of oil pumping stations and terminals. The Soviets would be inclined to attempt sabotage were they to believe that the damage would be so extensive that neither repairs nor replacement could be made effectively in wartime conditions. If proxy forces were not available for sabotage missions, the Soviets might employ special operations detachments.

One of the more subtle ways the Soviets could infiltrate commando units into place would be to disembark them from deployed warships. While there is no available evidence that special operations units have been attached to the crews of deployed Soviet naval units, the Soviets have the capability to place them aboard those ships by covert means within a few days. For example, they could fly into a local port commandos posing as replacements for civilian crew members aboard Soviet fishing trawlers and other civilian vessels. These commandos could later be transferred from civilian to naval ships at sea. They could even be mixed in with the small Soviet naval infantry forces aboard the amphibious ships which are usually present in the area.

Their targets would probably include oil terminals at Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and Yanbu, on Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast. (Opened in 1981, Yanbu is capable of delivering 1.6 billion barrels per day). Located in countries firmly tied to the West, both sites are within a few days transiting time of the principal logistical and maintenance bases of the Soviet West Africa Patrol and Indian Ocean Squadron (i.e., Luanda, Angola, and the Dahlac Islands, Ethiopia, respectively). These targets are located in areas where western naval forces are not normally deployed, and in which activities of such otherwise unimportant naval units as forward-deployed amphibious ships would likely be ignored, particularly in a wartime crisis when attention would be focused elsewhere. Moreover, were Soviet naval forces around Sub-Saharan Africa directed to proceed northward, to the closest home ports (e.g., Odessa for the Indian Ocean Squadron), the Soviets would be better able to achieve deception for their commando operations, since Yanbu and Port Harcourt lie north of the Dahlac Islands and Luanda, respectively.

If the Soviets are indeed preparing for a protracted, conventional war, the Nigerian oil terminals in particular might seem to be a worthwhile target. The largest African oil exporter, Nigeria is one of the US's principal foreign suppliers. In a major protracted war lasting many months, oil supplies from the US strategic petroleum reserves and the Western hemisphere would fall short of demand. The United States would have to turn to the Eastern Hemisphere for oil, but it would probably look to Nigeria before the Persian Gulf. That is because Nigeria's sea lines of communication to the United States are far shorter than those from the Persian Gulf and are located beyond the probable reach of Soviet military power even in a protracted conflict. I am assuming here that by the time the United States would need Nigerian oil, the south-central Atlantic would be cleared of Soviet naval combatants and the threat posed by Cuba would be neutralized. Hence, the Nigerian oil supply line would appear to be reasonably safe.

Given these considerations, the Soviets might believe the only reasonable chance they would have of interdicting the flow of oil from Nigeria would be to employ naval infantry commandos at the outset of a major war. The naval forces the Soviets deploy around Africa could thus play a minor role in wartime interdiction of oil supplies by targeting oil terminals, not tankers.

Africa's Potential as a Soviet Aircraft Carrier

Whereas the Soviet sea-based threat to oil tanker traffic seems highly improbable, a better case can be made that the Soviets might attempt to stage bombers from African airfields. Doing so would extend the range and on-station operating time of high performance bombers, such as the Backfire, and it would enable the Soviets to employ shorter-range bombers, like Tu-16 Badgers, in distant operations.

We also know that in developing an infrastructure in Somalia, Moscow built in certain capabilities to support Soviet combat operations. The so-called missile-handling and storage facility they built at Berbera was capable of handling a wide variety of air- and sea-launched conventional tactical missiles as well as other ordnance more sophisticated than those the Somalis had or were ever likely to receive.²³ The ordnance storage facility's proximity to both the large airfield then under construction and the port suggests its potential use for naval combatants and bomber aircraft.

However, it is unclear what contingencies the Soviets had in mind when they built into their support infrastructure at Berbera the capability to support strike aircraft. Before the Shah of Iran's fall, no conceivable regional scenario would have justified the acquisition of such capabilities. Moreover, with the rudimentary air defense capabilities the Soviets had installed at Berbera (a few SA-2 and -3 missiles), Soviet aircraft deployed there would have been vulnerable to Western attack. It is improbable that the Soviets would have risked exposing in this manner their Backfires--their most formidable combat assets, which moreover would have had high priority missions to perform operating from well-protected air bases on Soviet soil.

The Soviets may have intended to use on a contingency basis their older and less valuable bombers, such as the shorter-range Tu-16 Badger Gs or their longer-range Tu-95 Bear-Bs, in naval missions in the eastern Mediterranean. Even the shorter-range Badgers, when fully loaded and refueled in air, can easily reach the Mediterranean by staging from Berbera. Any bombers surviving an attack on Western forces might have then been able to return to Warsaw Pact airfields. By staging from Berbera Badger-Gs, armed with AS-5 Kelt or highly accurate AS-6 Kingfish antiship missiles, or Bear-Bs with AS-3 Kangaroo missiles, the Soviets could have tried to attack US naval forces in the eastern Mediterranean from a southern azimuth. This could have further complicated the Sixth Fleet's air defense problem in the area. If the reconnaissance assets protecting the Sixth Fleet were concentrated against a threat from the north, it would have left the carriers vulnerable to an air attack from the south.

Although Berbera's rudimentary air defense would have left Soviet bombers exposed, the Soviets may have calculated they could pull off a sneak, back-door attack. When they built these facilities, the Indian Ocean did not have permanently stationed US military forces capable of identifying what planes the Soviets flew into the area. What the Soviet Navy did then in the Indian Ocean was largely unimportant to US military planners. With the West's attention focused elsewhere during a crisis leading up to a NATO/Warsaw Pact war, the Soviets might have thought they could fly bombers unannounced and unnoticed over Afghanistan and western Pakistan (Baluchistan), then refuel and arm the bombers with air-to-surface missiles at Berbera, and take off for the Mediterranean without being detected until the bombers were within combat operational range.

The Soviets may have, in fact, originally intended such a mission for the Tu-16 Badger-Gs that were stationed at Aswan, Egypt, in the early 1970s. To be sure, these units never flew operational missions over the Mediterranean and were stationed at Aswan apparently for exclusive Egyptian use. This does not rule out the possibility that the Soviets would have wanted to use these planes in a wartime contingency against the Sixth Fleet. Perhaps, it is not simple coincidence that the Soviets began to build air combat support capabilities at Berbera about a year after they were forced to withdraw these Badger-Gs from Egypt as part of Sadat's July 1972 repatriation of Egyptian support facilities.

It is important to note that the Soviets have neither deployed bombers to African airfields since their eviction from Egypt nor built ordnance facilities in Africa of comparable capability to the one they lost at Berbera. In fact, since the loss of the expensive Somali facilities,²⁴ the Soviets seem to have built "down" their support infrastructure in the region. At Dahlac, which replaced Berbera as the Soviet Navy's main Indian Ocean logistic and maintenance base,²⁵ the Soviets have used only easily movable equipment such as the same 8,500 ton floating drydock they had stationed at Berbera, floating piers, water and fuel storage tanks.²⁶

If this "build-down" reflects Soviet and not Ethiopian desires, then it was probably motivated in part by Moscow's undoubted reluctance to construct expensive support infrastructures in unstable Third World countries. By comparison, the Soviets have not shown any reticence in building at

Vietnam's Cam Ranh Bay what the US Director of Naval Intelligence has described as "Moscow's first true overseas base."²⁷ The long-term reliability of Soviet relations with access donors seems to have become an important criterion in Soviet investment decisions on overseas military construction.

In the Indian Ocean region, military factors also may have reinforced Moscow's possible decision to build "down" its naval support infrastructure in the region. The potential wartime value of African airfields for the USSR has probably declined in recent years, largely because it has become much easier for the Soviets to project airpower toward the eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf/Arabian Sea directly from Soviet air bases. This is due primarily to the increased number and improved quality of Soviet bomber assets coupled with the weakening of Iranian defenses. In addition, Soviet use of improved airfields and support facilities in Afghanistan could extend to the shores of the Arabian Sea the range of the fighter protection for Backfires operating against US carrier forces.

This hypothesis about the declining wartime utility of African facilities runs counter to the view that the Soviets would want to use them in order to mount a flank attack against NATO forces mainly as a diversion to keep the latter from massing to attack Warsaw Pact forces in the key central and northern European regions. To be specific, Soviet use of facilities in northwest Africa, including islands offshore, to support air and naval combat missions against transatlantic convoys would supposedly force the United States to divert naval forces from concentrating on higher priority missions (e.g., attacking Soviet SSBNs in the Norwegian/Barents Sea sanctuaries).

However, this thesis can be challenged on several grounds. First, in attempting to divert NATO forces by means of a flank attack, the Soviets would be diverting their own forces in the process. Moreover, unless the air defenses of forward airfields were to be strengthened considerably, Soviet aircraft deployed to them would themselves be vulnerable to attack. Second, by employing their combat forces in forward areas, the Soviets would lose flexibility in performing multiple combat missions besides creating additional requirements for protecting the forces so employed. Third, the forward area is in general not a favorable operating environment for the Soviets in a major war. To perform the anti-SLOC mission, for example, they would undoubtedly obtain better results with fewer losses by targeting European ports of debarkation or Western warships and civilian cargo vessels at a distance closer to Warsaw Pact bases where Soviet combat forces could be better supported and perform other missions as well. Fourth, NATO does not need to divert major combat assets to deal with a Soviet flank attack. It could instead protect its naval forces simply by establishing an all-aspect defense screen against Soviet submarines and bombers. Or it could attack Soviet bombers with long range fighter aircraft staged from airfields in NATO's southern region and Soviet submarines with various ASW combat forces. The latter operation would be a minor diversion of Western combat assets which would be made worthwhile because the attacking Soviet forces could be disposed of with an economy of force. These disadvantages suggest the Soviets would lose more than they would gain from using African facilities to mount a flank attack against NATO forces.

Although the Soviets would seem to need to stage bombers from African airfields less now than in the past, there are still some specific situations in which the USSR could make advantageous use of them in wartime. Should major combat operations be conducted in the Mediterranean, Libyan airfields could advantageously be used for the recovery and turn-around of surviving Soviet aircraft launched from Warsaw Pact air bases. Also, by using Libya's ordnance and POL storage facilities, the Soviets could rearm and refuel their bombers for missions against naval forces and other targets in the Western Mediterranean region. Rapidly improving Libyan air defense capabilities would afford better protection for Soviet aircraft staging from Libyan airfields. Airfields in or near northwest and east Africa, however, are located too far from probable main combat zones in the North Atlantic (above the Greenland-Iceland-UK gap) and the Persian Gulf/North Arabian Sea to be very useful for recovery purposes.

In a transitional stage of a war that started in Southwest Asia, airfields in southern Africa could play a prominent role. Should a Southwest Asia conflict escalate horizontally and US carriers be routed around the Cape of Good Hope to the Atlantic, airfields in Mozambique or even Angola could possibly be used for recovery and turn-around of long-range Backfires, staging from Soviet home bases against carriers in transit.²⁸ The unrefueled combat radius of the Backfire, 2,960 nm, would permit it to reach from Soviet airfields targets located about as far south as the Seychelles.²⁹

In view of the light air defenses of airfields in Mozambique,³⁰ such use would place Soviet strike aircraft in jeopardy. The Soviets might nevertheless take this risk if they had a reasonable chance of disabling a carrier thereby.

Thus, despite obvious hypothetical advantages that wartime use of African airfields would have in extending the reach of Soviet airpower, the actual circumstances in which the Soviets might make effective use of those airfields are few. And due to recent changes in the military environment, such employments appear to be less important now than they may have been only a few years back.

Would African States Permit Wartime Airfield Use?

The above discussion has been predicated on the assumption that African states would be willing to permit the Soviets to use their airfields (or any other military facilities) in a major war. This assumption would seem to be unwarranted. No Third World leader has displayed a willingness to see his homeland become a battlefield in a NATO/Warsaw Pact war. In fact, even those Third World countries that support the Soviet Navy and rely heavily on Soviet arms imports and security assistance continue to depend heavily on Western economic trade, aid, and private investment. With their economies tied to the West, they have much to lose from a NATO/Warsaw Pact conflict, especially if it left the Western economies in ruins. Hence, they would hardly be likely to throw in their lots with the Soviets in a coalition war.

When Third World statesmen have granted the Soviet Navy access privileges, they have generally done so because it directly served their

countries' security interests. Some of them, such as Egypt's President Nasser, recognized that supporting the Soviet Navy not only served their own country's security interests but also those of the Soviet homeland.³¹

Only in rare instances has a Third World access donor allowed a superpower to develop facilities to be used for purposes that evidently did not directly serve its own security interests. As noted above, this happened in Somalia in the 1970s. But Mogadiscio's evident willingness to permit the Soviets to build a military support complex capable of being used, perhaps effectively, in support of Soviet strike air combat operations in the eastern Mediterranean does not mean that the Somalia would have permitted these facilities to be used for the apparent purposes they were constructed. We should not assume that a clear understanding regarding the wartime contexts in which these facilities would be utilized by the Soviets preceded their construction. Misrepresentation, wishful thinking, or both, perhaps on the part of each party, may have played a role in the negotiations.³² Somalia's President Siad Barre apparently believed the Soviets would never need to use them in wartime. He appears to have been sufficiently impressed by US-Soviet progress toward detente in the early 1970s to assume that superpower conflicts were highly unlikely to erupt from a regional crisis. He was, in fact, the only leader of an Indian Ocean littoral nation to state openly in the mid-1970s that the Indian Ocean was already a "zone of peace."³³ He may therefore have thought it safe enough to allow the Soviets to develop elaborate combat support facilities at Berbera.

As matters turned out, Siad Barre was instrumental, perhaps unwittingly so, in arranging matters so that the Soviets apparently never employed the ordnance facility for their own use. In the summer of 1975, soon after the ordnance facility's completion, Siad Barre invited a US congressional delegation led by Senator Dewey F. Bartlett [Republican-Oklahoma] to inspect the Berbera support complex ostensibly in order to disprove photographic evidence about the nature of the complex presented before the Senate Armed Services Committee by Defense Secretary James Schlesinger in early June. The visit of the Bartlett delegation, composed of DoD experts, had the opposite effect; and the negative publicity garnered by the so-called "missile-handling and storage" facility in particular did much to erode congressional resistance to the funding of what was then an austere naval support facility on Diego Garcia.³⁴ The negative publicity seems to have kept the Soviets from using the ordnance facility even for making repairs of the missiles for their naval combatants. This may also have been an additional reason why they have not built comparable facilities elsewhere in the Third World.

What this episode suggests is that Soviet interests (in this case, restricting the development of Diego Garcia) have been damaged when they have built support facilities whose employment could not be justified in terms of the host nation's security interests. Today there are no exigencies on the African continent that could rationalize the stationing of Soviet attack aircraft, much less developing facilities for their support. This applies even to southern Africa, for the Soviets so far have not displayed an interest in directly tangling with South Africa's armed forces even in defense of Mozambique or Angola.³⁵

In a major war, Third World access donors are not likely to permit the Soviets to use military support facilities. (This assumes that access donors have the power to exercise their sovereign will.³⁶) Should these countries believe their interests would be served best by noninvolvement in a major coalition war, they would undoubtedly withdraw support for the Soviet Navy at the outbreak of hostilities, if not before. However, the support obtained before then would have enhanced the combat readiness and capabilities of Soviet naval forces on the eve of battle. To predict the outcome of various combat scenarios is difficult, yet it is even more difficult to estimate what contribution using facilities in forward areas may make to the effectiveness of the combat forces supported. Such usage may make a significant, perhaps critical, difference; yet Soviet combatant forces might have been equally effective without their employment. And it is possible, of course, that these combat forces will be ineffective, no matter how much their combat readiness and capabilities are enhanced through using facilities in the forward area. Even if high value Soviet combatants were withdrawn from forward areas to perform higher priority wartime missions elsewhere during a war, previous logistical and maintenance services they might have received at port facilities would have better prepared them for the voyage home.³⁷

It would matter little if an access-granting nation cut off support to Soviet naval forces prior to hostilities. In a major war, Soviet surface combatants and probably submarines as well would not survive long enough to need shore-based logistic and maintenance support after the battle had started. Depending on how successfully these forces maneuvered during the crisis stage, they could be positioned to inflict enough damage to Western naval forces as to make their own sacrifice worthwhile. This is not simply a hypothetical possibility. In the October 1973 Middle East war, Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean were interspersed with Sixth Fleet units, and US carriers were highly vulnerable to Soviet attack with surface-to-surface missiles.³⁸ Had a superpower war at sea broken out then, US naval forces would have lost the advantage that the superior range of US sea and land-based airpower normally provides in countering the Soviet surface fleet. Thus, even if African access donors were to withdraw all Soviet access privileges before the outbreak of a war, the peacetime support they had furnished the Soviet Navy would have had some wartime value.

The Role of Africa in Remote Crisis Contingencies

I have examined critically some widely held notions about the potential wartime value of the Soviet use of African facilities. However, since the focus has been on the Soviet employment of their own combat forces in wars involving US forces and fought around the periphery of Africa, this discussion is not complete. The role of Africa in relation to major conflicts fought far from its shores has probably influenced Soviet strategy significantly.

Africa's role in a possible Sino-Soviet war is an important case in point. The shortest sea lines of communication between the USSR's European and Pacific ports run through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. (The next fastest Soviet sea lanes to the Far East run around the Cape of Good

Hope.³⁹⁾ In a Sino-Soviet war, when Soviet rail lines across Siberia would be overloaded or severed, the southern sea route would become critically important. Although the stockpiling of war material in the Soviet Far East has reduced the need for rapid reinforcement and resupply there in a Sino-Soviet war, the Soviets would still want to secure both unhindered passage for their ships through the Suez Canal and Bab el-Mandab choke-points, since this would save roughly two weeks time for vessels traveling at an average speed of 20 knots. Moscow would also like to have access to African support facilities available should it be needed by ships in transit to the Far East.

As students of history, the Soviets are mindful of past problems of deploying Russian naval forces to the Far East. Commenting on the voyage around Africa of the Tsarist naval squadron that the Japanese sunk at the Tsushima straits in 1905, Admiral Gorshkov wrote in Sea Power of the State:

The history of the Russian fleet and indeed of other fleets still did not know of such a distant and long movement of a huge fleet consisting of a variety of ships, some of which were not fully seaworthy, with no experience of combined long-distance oceanic travel. Over the entire route the squadron did not have a single base for resting the crew, for repair and supply. Most of the shores along which it passed belonged to hostile England.⁴⁰⁾

Certainly the world could not have appeared much different to Soviet military planners in the late 1960s, when the danger of a war with China seemed great. That was before the Soviets started to build the Baikal Amur-Maritime (BAM) rail line along a northern parallel to the Trans-Siberian railroad, before they established a permanent naval presence off the east and west coasts of Sub-Saharan Africa (they did so in 1969 and 1970, respectively); that was also when Chinese influence was strong in Tanzania and South Yemen. One of the factors underlying the Soviets' acute sensitivity toward the Chinese presence in Africa may have been their concern that Chinese influence could be so exercised as to obstruct Soviet sea lines of communication to the Far East during critical crisis situations. (South Yemen's Perim Island abuts the Bab al-Mandab and could be used to block traffic through that choke point.⁴¹⁾

Today the China factor in Soviet military strategy towards Africa is far less important. Moscow's influence in Africa, which its naval presence has enhanced, is undoubtedly strong enough to counter any possible Chinese effort to hinder indirectly Soviet passage through African waters. Also, the Soviet buildup of naval forces in the South China Sea since 1979 (it now numbers roughly 30 units) makes it less likely that they will need to surge forces from the Indian Ocean during a Sino-Soviet crisis.

A Caribbean Crisis

Africa could also play an important role in a Caribbean crisis. In such a scenario, the Soviets would undoubtedly need to stage a military airlift to Cuba. The two main long-range Soviet military transport planes, the

Il-76 Candid and An-22 Cock, have limited range with maximum payloads (2,640 nm and 2,260 nm, respectively) and do not possess capabilities for in-flight refueling.⁴² Assuming that West European airfields would be off-limits to Soviet military transports in a Caribbean crisis contingency, these planes would need to be refueled twice at airfields in Africa, optimally in Algeria and Cape Verde.

The shorter-range An-22 Cocks would have had to refuel a third time. The large airfield the Soviets and Cubans had been building in Grenada prior to the US military intervention in October 1983 would have been a suitable refueling point for such a crisis airlift.⁴³ Its use would have allowed flights to avoid landing on unfriendly territory and to avert incidents similar to the April 1983 detention in Brazil of Libyan airplanes clandestinely ferrying a cargo of military supplies to Nicaragua.

To recapitulate: though the actual peacetime use of African facilities enhances Soviet war preparations only indirectly and to a limited degree, the potential wartime significance of Africa to the Soviets is highly uncertain. In a major war involving the United States, it is uncertain whether the Soviets would want to use African facilities (certainly they would seem to need African airfields today less than in the past); and even if they wanted to do so, it is unlikely that African states would permit such use. Much clearer, however, is the Soviet need of African airfields in a Central American and Caribbean crisis scenarios. They likely would be allowed such use even in a Caribbean scenario involving US forces. Such a conflict would undoubtedly be localized. The United States could obstruct a Soviet military airlift outside of the war zone only by applying diplomatic pressure to African states. Soviet influence in key countries, such as Libya, Algeria, Cape Verde and Guinea, is probably strong enough to counter successfully such US pressure.

The strategic importance of Africa in wartime is not limited to facilities and the Soviet forces they support. In a general coalition war, economic sites such as oil terminals and cobalt mines would be targets. In a major Southwest Asia conflict, military installations such as US staging areas would also be targets. The Soviets would probably want to attack these with foreign proxy forces if their own could not. These proxy forces could be recruited for sabotage from either insurgent groups or any remaining elements of the roughly 36,000 Cuban troops estimated to be currently stationed in Africa.⁴⁴ The Soviets appear able to attack targets located beyond effective range of their forces.

A final observation: the wartime importance of Africa to the Soviets is highly scenario-dependent. Africa does have strategic importance to the Soviets, but in specific ways that vary greatly according to the scenario. In Tables 1 and 2, I have summarized possible Soviet objectives in war scenarios in which Africa is involved.

In the European war scenario, I have assumed that Western naval forces would remain in the Mediterranean and that surviving Soviet bombers of an attack against NATO naval and land-based forces in the Mediterranean would be permitted to refuel and rearm at Libyan airfields. As indicated above, there are good reasons to challenge both assumptions. Despite Qaddafi's

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Targets</u>	<u>Forces Employed</u>	<u>Military Support Location</u>
Europe	Western Fleets, military installations in the Mediterranean	Bombers, submarines	Libyan airfields (for recovery and turnaround of bombers)
	Economic targets: Nigerian oil terminals Red Sea oil Terminals Zairean cobalt mines South African transportation system	Saboteurs (proxies and commandos) Saboteurs (proxies) Saboteurs (proxies)	West Africa Ethiopia
Southwest Asia	US combat forces at sea	Naval combatants, bombers, maritime reconnaissance planes	Ethiopia, South Yemen
	US staging areas (e.g., Oman)	Naval and air forces saboteurs	Ethiopia, South Yemen
Horizontal Escalation of Southwest Asian War	US carrier forces (exiting the Indian Ocean via the Cape)	Backfires	Mozambique airfields (for recovery and turnaround of Backfires)

Table 1. Strategic Importance of Africa to the Soviet Union for Wars Fought on the Periphery of Africa.

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Military Support Location</u>
Sino-Soviet War	Unhindered passage through Suez Canal-Bab el Mandeb choke points	Ethiopia, South Yemen
	Port facilities available to support ships in transit to the Far East	Ethiopia, South Yemen, Angola
Caribbean Crisis	Airfields landing and refueling privileges	Algeria, Libya, Cape Verde

Table 2. Strategic Importance of Africa to the Soviet Union for Major Crises Remote from Africa.

rhetoric, Libya's economic interests work against support for the Soviets in a NATO/Warsaw Pact war. Economic targets have been listed in order of probable Soviet priority. Since US strategic petroleum reserves contain a few months' supply (at normal peacetime consumption levels) and US strategic stockpiles of cobalt, chromium and manganese contain several years of supply, oil seems a more valuable military target, especially in a war that lasted less than a year. Of the non-fuel mineral targets, Zaire's few cobalt mines, whose production depends on highly specialized equipment and technical personnel, seem the easier and more lucrative target, especially if the US cobalt stockpile remains significantly behind the goal. Because South Africa's ferro-chromium production is so dispersed, its railroad network and port facilities are so well developed and numerous, and its security forces so capable, the Soviets would find it exceedingly difficult to interdict the flow of South Africa's critical minerals to the West in wartime.

The Impact on Soviet Policy Towards Africa

One may assume that the strategic wartime importance of Africa to the USSR is less alarming than many have said. It does not appear to be particularly impressive in light of US forces employed around the African periphery. The limited strategic military benefits the Soviets derive and may expect to gain from Africa do not seem to go far toward explaining Soviet activism in Africa over the past two decades.

Though the quest for access has given additional impetus to the cultivation of relations with some regimes, the fundamental thrust of Soviet foreign policy has not been altered. For example, concern for the preservation of extensive access privileges in Egypt and Somalia did not prevent the Soviets from taking actions that diverged from the interests of those host nations. When relations with Egypt soured, the Soviets simply looked elsewhere for naval access. Although the Soviets "pulled their punches" in dealing with Mogadiscio until they were expelled from Somalia in November 1977, they never acceded to Siad Barre's demand that they not support Ethiopia. In both the Egyptian and Somali cases, the Soviets appear to have assumed that submitting to Third World blackmail over access could

establish a dangerous precedent, entailing even greater problems in the long term than losing access.

In material and political terms, the Soviets paid greatly for the Somali facilities. The need for access definitely distorted Soviet policy on the Horn of Africa. In the early 1970s, when the Soviets decided to buy access to Somali facilities with modern weapons, they ignored the warnings of their Africanists about the dangers of dealing with an irredentist regime.⁴⁵ They seem to have taken a calculated risk that a strong US-backed Ethiopia would deter any Somali military adventures. The 1974 Ethiopian revolution, which eventually altered the military balance on the Horn, apparently caught them by surprise. Even in the mid-1970s, when the unstable situation in Ethiopia aroused Somali nationalism, the Soviets did not temper their support for Somalia. Instead, they increased their military aid in exchange for additional access privileges, while securing Somalia's pledge, written into their 1974 friendship treaty, to use that aid for "defensive purposes" only. And finally, in opting to become Ethiopia's principal armorer in 1977, the Soviets appear to have miscalculated Somalia's reaction. They then served as involuntary accomplices to Somalia's aggression. Had the Soviets not bought access to Somali facilities with roughly \$370 million worth of weapons, they would not have had to supply Ethiopia with anywhere near the \$1.3 billion worth of weapons they delivered in 1977 and 1978.⁴⁶ Nor would they have had to bear probably larger costs connected with the intervention of over 13,000 Cuban troops in Ethiopia. Had the Soviets not furnished Somalia with the wherewithal to fight a major war, the Ogaden War would have been about as noteworthy as the POLISARIO conflict in the western Sahara. Without the need for access, the Soviets probably would never have aligned themselves so closely with what the rest of Africa regarded as a "pariah" state. The Soviet-Somali military connection was an expression of the weakness, not strength, of Soviet policy in Sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1970s.

Today, however, the Soviets have more access options than they did over a decade ago when they felt compelled to turn to Somalia for support of their Indian Ocean Squadron. They have succeeded in placing their access "eggs" in two baskets, Ethiopia and South Yemen. This should improve their bargaining power with each donor. They also apparently have sought to use military assistance to expand access options. For example, they supplied 50 percent or more of all the arms imported by six African littoral nations in the decade ending in 1973.⁴⁷ The corresponding number of African littoral states for the years 1978 through 1982 has risen to sixteen.⁴⁸ (The nations during the earlier time period were: Algeria, Congo, Egypt, Guinea, Somalia and the Sudan. The countries during the later period were: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia.)

Although usually more is involved in gaining naval access than simply transferring arms, the Soviets have been able to expand greatly the field of actual and potential access donors. With more African states available to meet the USSR's evidently reduced military support needs, Moscow will probably not feel compelled in the future to take political gambles for access similar to those it took in Somalia.

Where to Focus Western Concern

Thus, the Soviets do not seem to pose a major military threat to the West in Africa. A Soviet naval threat to the oil tanker traffic from the Persian Gulf seems unjustifiably alarmist. If the Soviets were to use their naval forces around Africa, it more likely would be against Western warships than oil tankers. It is uncertain whether the Soviets would need African airfields in a major coalition war. It is also doubtful that they would be permitted to use them. This is not to deny that the Soviets have strategic military interests in Africa. They do, but these interests are limited and their nature varies according to scenario.

This assessment should not lead to complacency. Aspects of Soviet activities in Africa should concern Western military planners. One matter of concern is Soviet ability to use deception and maneuver during a pre-hostilities crisis phase to maximize the combat effectiveness of older and less capable combatants in waters around Africa.

Africa's capabilities to support Soviet bomber operations should be monitored periodically, as should the intentions of access donors. Comparing capabilities with host nation intentions could be useful in two ways. First, a more reliable estimate of Moscow's ability to employ these facilities in wartime contingencies would be calculated. Second, a rare opportunity to limit Soviet military power in peacetime could be provided. Such an opportunity could arise when Soviet development or use of naval support facilities does not directly serve a host's interests. In such cases, pressure can and has been successfully applied to curb Soviet use of facilities, as the 1975 Somalia example described earlier suggests.⁴⁹

The focus of Western concern about the Soviet military threat in Africa should not be limited to facilities and their use by Soviet combat forces. Although most of Africa would probably be beyond the reach of Soviet forces in a coalition war, there are economic targets that the Soviets would want to sabotage preferably with foreign proxy forces. Western security assistance programs can be designed to protect exports of Nigeria's oil and Zaire's cobalt. This would benefit producer and consumer nations.

The potential military threats the Soviets pose to the West in Africa are specific. They can and should be countered with the timely and limited application of resources. Indeed, to commit more resources than would be required would divert Western combat assets needed to perform more critical missions to the north.

ENDNOTES

1. Chromium, probably the most important of Sub-Saharan Africa's strategic minerals, is essential to the production of stainless steel and superalloys. It is used in the manufacture of jet engines, linings of tank barrels and armor plates for tanks and ships. Cobalt is used in making jet engine blades and missile components. Manganese, essential in the manufacture of steel, is used specifically in the production of aircraft components and ship propellers. Platinum is used as a catalyst in the petroleum and chemical industries.

2. The US Government maintains national stockpiles of strategic minerals whose goals represent the US Federal Emergency Management Administration's estimates of needs during a major three-year war. As of the early 1980's, the stockpile goals of all strategic minerals mined in Africa except for cobalt had been met. The US national stockpile of cobalt was just one-half of the 85.4 million-pound stockpile goal. During the Reagan Administration's first term, the US Government purchased cobalt to eliminate this deficiency.

3. Some analysts have argued that the quality of a significant amount of the stockpiled cobalt and other minerals acquired over 20 years ago when industrial requirements were not as exacting, is unsuitable for modern high performance jet engines. See, for example, Barry M. Blechman, National Security and Strategic Minerals: An Analysis of US Dependence on Foreign Sources of Cobalt, Boulder: Westview Press, 1985, p. 39. The US Federal Emergency Management Agency stockpile estimates are presumably based solely on US wartime requirements. In a coalition war, it is not clear what Western European requirements for emergency imports of strategic minerals might be, much less how such demands might impact on US strategic mineral stockpiles.

4. This evidence is presented in James McConnell, The Soviet Shift in Emphasis From Nuclear to Conventional RC490, Vol. II, Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 1983, pp. 23-35. See also James McConnell, "Shifts in Soviet Perspectives on the Proper Focus of Military Development," World Politics, April 1985, pp. 317-43.

5. See McConnell, "Shifts in Soviet Perspectives...", pp. 333-36.

6. See McConnell, The Soviet Shift in Emphasis From Nuclear to Conventional, Vol. II, pp. 32-33; and Statement of Rear Admiral John L. Butts, U.S. Navy, Director of Naval Intelligence Before the Seapower and Strategic and Critical Minerals Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on the Naval Threat, 24 February 1983, p. 16.

7. For indications of a possible Soviet breakthrough in ASW technology, see "Spotting Soviet Strategic Advances," Wall Street Journal, September 5, 1984; and "Soviets Said Able to Target US Subs From Space by Radar," Washington Times, August 16, 1984, p. 5A.

8. For an excellent discussion of the economic importance of the Indian Ocean to the USSR, see Lieutenant Commander James T. Westwood, U.S.N., "The

Soviet Union and the Southern Sea Route," Naval War College Review, Vol. 35, January/February 1982, pp. 54-67.

9. Indirect logistic support can be provided, though not as efficiently, when auxiliary support or merchant vessels take on consumables for later transfer to naval units in international waters.

10. See US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 96th Congress, First Session, United States Foreign Policy Objectives and Overseas Military Installations, Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1979, p. 91.

11. See John Jordan, An Illustrated Guide to the Modern Soviet Navy, London: Salamander Books, 1982, p. 90.

12. See Lieutenant Commander William F. Hickman, "Soviet Naval Policy in the Indian Ocean," US Naval Institute Proceedings, August 1979, p. 50.

13. See Lloyd's List, June 13, 1981.

14. Periodic staging of Soviet maritime surveillance flights from Asmara, Ethiopia, was suspended after the destruction of two Il-38 May ASW planes by Eritrean rebels in May 1984. See US Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power, Fourth Edition, Washington: US Government Printing Office, March 1985, p. 123.

15. For further detail, see Charles Petersen, "Trends in Soviet Naval Operations," in Soviet Naval Diplomacy, ed. by Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, New York: Pergamon Press, 1979, pp. 54-59; and Soviet Military Power, 4th Ed., pp. 118, 123-25.

16. On one occasion, in 1976, the Soviets staged Tu-95 Bear-Ds from Somalia's Dafet (Uanle Uen) airfield. They are currently expanding South Yemen's al-Anad airfield, now used for Il-38 May flights. This will enable them to deploy Bear-Ds and thereby greatly extend their maritime reconnaissance coverage of the Indian Ocean, to include aerial surveillance of Diego Garcia. See Department of the Navy, Understanding Soviet Naval Developments, 5th Ed. Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1985, p. 10.

17. Ibid., p. 10.

18. The Soviets also operated a long-range communications station at Berbera until 1977, reportedly to relay messages between the USSR and Soviet naval forces deployed forward. See U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Armed Services, Disapprove Construction Projects on the Island of Diego Garcia, Hearings, 94th Congress, 1st Session, June 10, 1975. This communications station has since been moved to South Yemen. See Soviet Military Power, 4th Ed., p. 128.

19. The data in this section are contained in US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1972-1982, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1984.

20. Of these countries, Ethiopia, with \$2.4 billion worth of Soviet arms imports from 1978 through 1982, is the largest recipient.

21. According to one estimate, approximately ten percent of Moscow's total hard currency earnings come from arms sales to the Third World, of which Libya and Algeria's share is very high. See Andrew J. Pierre, The Global Politics of Arms Sales, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, p. 79.

22. As of 1984, Libya had received 50 MiG-25As, 5 MiG-24Us, as well as such other modern Soviet weapons as 300 T-72 tanks, 143 MiG-23 Flogger-Es, 18 MiG-23 BM Flogger-Fs, 30 Mi-24 Hind helicopters and roughly 500 Sa-3/-6/-8/-9/-13 SAMs. See The Military Balance, 1984-85, London: IISS, 1984, pp. 66-67.

23. See Disapprove Construction Projects on the Island of Diego Garcia, p. 7.

24. The naval support infrastructure the Soviets built at Berbera was one of the most elaborate they have built overseas, outside of Cuba and Vietnam. Besides dredging Berbera's harbor and developing port facilities (piers, cranes, warehouses, etc.) and operating a long-range communications station, the Soviets also expanded Berbera's POL storage facilities, built an elaborate ordnance storage and repair installation, and a large airfield with a 13,500-foot runway. These facilities are described in Disapprove Construction Projects on the Island of Diego Garcia; and US Congress, Soviet Military Capability in Berbera, Somalia. Report of Senator Bartlett to the Committee on Armed Services, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1975. Information on the Soviet use of these facilities is contained in Charles C. Petersen, "Trends in Soviet Naval Operations," pp. 37-87. The head civilian contractor of US military construction at Berbera estimated conservatively that it would have cost at a minimum \$200 million for the United States to have constructed only those installations the Soviets left behind at Berbera. This does not include the communications station, POL storage tanks and billeting quarters at Berbera. Nor does that figure cover the costs of several additional airfields and other installations the Soviets constructed elsewhere in Somalia that were primarily for Somali use.

25. Dahlac services about 70 Soviet naval ships per year for the past five years. Since April 1983, ships from the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron have also called at Dahlac for repairs and maintenance. See Understanding Soviet Naval Developments, Fifth Ed., p. 10.

26. For details, see Soviet Military Power, 4th Ed., p. 123.

27. See Statement of Rear Admiral John L. Butts, US Navy, Director of Naval Intelligence, before the Seapower and Force Projection Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee on the Naval Threat, 26 February 1985, p. 14. The facilities at Cam Ranh Bay support the largest concentration of Soviet naval forces outside the USSR. The Soviets also have developed signal intelligence facilities and stationed Bear D reconnaissance, Bear F ASW aircraft, MiG-23 interceptors, and nearly 20 Tu-16 Badgers, including the first strike aircraft to be deployed overseas since 1972, when the

Soviets were forced to withdraw them from Egypt. For further detail, see Soviet Military Power, Fourth Ed., p. 118.

28. From Tashkent the air distances are 4,500 nautical miles to Maputo, Mozambique, and 4,600 nautical miles to Luanda, Angola. These are well within the 8,200 nautical miles maximum range of the Backfire. See Bill Gunston, An Illustrated Guide to the Modern Soviet Air Force, London: Salamander Books, 1982, p. 130.

29. See Soviet Military Power, 4th Ed., p. 34.

30. By 1984, Mozambique had 30 SA-3, SA-7 and ten SA-8 SAMs. See The Military Balance, 1984-85, p. 79.

31. See his July 23, 1968 speech in the Egyptian Gazette, July 24, 1968, p. 5.

32. For further elaboration on Soviet-Somali military "cooperation," see Richard B. Remnek, "The Soviet-Somali 'Arms for Access' Relationship," Soviet Union/Union Sovietique, Vol. 10, Part 1, 1983, pp. 59-81.

33. See Siad Barre's interviews in Remarques Africaines, 31 July 1974, pp. 14-15, translated in Joint Publications Research Service, No. 62978, 16 September 1974, Sub-Saharan Africa Report, No. 1517, p. 103; and Al-Arabi (Kuwait) January 1975, pp. 22-23, translated in Joint Publications Research Service, No. 64245, 5 March 1975, Sub-Saharan Africa Report, No. 1569, p. 34.

34. A US Senate resolution sponsored by Senator Mansfield, which would have suspended funding for Diego Garcia, was defeated soon after the Bartlett delegation visit.

35. This is suggested by a 1980 Soviet article in Narody Azii I Afriki. The author, having described in detail South Africa's impressive military capabilities, does not even close with the standard pro forma profession of "fraternal" Soviet bloc support for the front line African states threatened by South Africa. See T. I. Krasnopevtseva, "Voennopromyshlennyi kompleks IuAR," Narody Azii I Afriki, No. 2, 1980, pp. 109-118.

36. There have been ample precedents where the Soviets have used their privileged access against host nation interests. They used Cairo West airfield to transship military supplies to India, the wrong country in Egypt's view, during the December 1971 Indo-Pakistani War. Eight years later, Soviet control of Bagram airfield facilitated their intervention against the Hafizullah Amin regime. (For additional details on the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, see Jiri Valenta, "From Prague to Kabul: The Soviet Style of Invasion," International Security, Fall 1980, pp. 114-41.) Despite the thousands of Soviet military advisers and tens of thousands of Cuban military personnel in African states, these nations should be able to enforce decisions that Moscow might wish to oppose by force as their military capabilities improve and if they take precautions to control the disposition and activities of Soviet bloc advisers.

37. In most crises, where the outcome--in peace or war--is uncertain, the Soviets likely would not withdraw their deployed naval forces en masse. This would give advance warning of Soviet strategic intentions. Any changes in the composition of those forces would likely be made discreetly. The disposition of Soviet naval forces on the eve of the October 1973 Middle East War can serve as a model of how the Soviets might behave. The Soviets removed their modern Kara-class guided missile cruiser from the Mediterranean on the day before the Egyptian attack. Only a few first generation modern surface combatants (Kashin-class destroyers and Kynda-class cruisers) were present when the war started. As Robert G. Weinland noted, "It is almost as though the Soviets, knowing conflict was imminent and fearing that their naval forces might become directly involved, decided to minimize the potential damage they might suffer through such involvement by withholding their newer, more capable units and deploying their older, less capable units--the loss of which would not be crippling." Robert G. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy in the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War: A Case Study," Sea Power in the Mediterranean: Political Utility and Military Constraints in Edward N. Luttwak and Robert G. Weinland, The Washington Papers, No. 61, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979, p. 78.

38. Ibid., p. 74.

39. From Odessa to Vladivostok it is 11,000 miles by sea through the Suez Canal and 17,000 miles around the Cape route. At an average speed of 14 knots, it takes thirty-two days by the shorter route and fifty days by the longer one to make this voyage.

40. Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, Morskaia moshch' gosudarstva, Moscow: 1976, p. 152.

41. From the June 1967 war until 1975 the Suez Canal was closed. The Soviets may have regarded the closure as a passing phenomenon. They were acutely sensitive to Chinese influence in Somalia and the Yemens before the reopening of the Canal and have remained so since then. See Remnek, "The Soviet-Somali 'Arms for Access' Relationship," and Lieutenant Commander Charles T. Creekman, Jr., U.S.N., "Sino-Soviet Competition in the Yemens," Naval War College Review, Vol. 32, July/August 1979, pp. 73-82. It is worth adding that the 1979 Soviet treaty with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen is the only treaty the Soviets have signed with a Third World state to contain a thinly-veiled anti-Chinese reference. Article seven calls "for the elimination from the practice of international relations of any manifestation of the policy of hegemonism and expansionism." (Pravda, October 26, 1979). Salem Rubayi Ali, the PDRY President deposed and executed in a July 1978 coup, was widely regarded as pro-Chinese.

42. Soviet Military Power, 4th Ed., p. 83.

43. For evidence that the Grenadan government expected the airfield to be used by the Soviet and Cuban military, see the March 22, 1980 notebook entry of Liam James, the Deputy of General Hudson Austin, published in US Department of State and Department of Defense Grenada Documents: An

Overview and Selections, Washington: US Government Printing Office, September 1984, document 23.

44. See Soviet Military Power, 4th Ed., p. 116.

45. See Ia. Ia. Etinger, Mezhdugosudarstvennye otnosheniia v Afrike, Moscow: 1972, pp. 71-84.

46. See US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1969-78, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1980, p. 161.

47. Computed from data in US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Trade 1963-73, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 67-68.

48. Computed from data in US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Trade 1972-82, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1984, p. 95.

49. There may be other examples clearer than the Bartlett visit to Berbera. It is conceivable, for example, that Guinean President Sekou Toure's decision to cancel Tu-95 Bear D flights from Conakry in 1977 was influenced in part by the realization that the Bear Ds were performing missions unrelated to Guinea's security needs. This is suggested by the report of the Guinean termination of these Soviet flights in The New York Times, November 19, 1977.

DISTRIBUTION

Office of the Secretary of Defense
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
Assistant Secretary (Int'l Security Affairs)

Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director J-5 (Plans and Policy)
Director, Strategic Plans and Resource Analysis Agency
Director, Joint Analysis

Department of Defense
Deputy Director for Intelligence and External Affairs

Headquarters, Department of the Army
Office of the Secretary
Office of the Chief of Staff
ODCSOPS
Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans
Director, Strategy Plans & Policy
Deputy Director, Strategy Plans & Policy
Deputy Director for Planning, Strategy Plans and Policy
Strategic Plans & Policy Div
Long-Range Planning Div
Politico-Military Div
War Plans Div
Regional Branch - Africa
Security Assistance Division

OACSI
Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff for Foreign and Counter Intelligence
Director of Foreign Intelligence

Service Schools
Commandant, Air War College
Commandant, Air University
President, National Defense University
Acting Director, Institute for National Strategic Studies
Commandant, National War College
Commandant, Armed Forces Staff College
President, Naval War College
Commandant, ICAF
Deputy for Education, Marine Corps Development and Education Command
Superintendent, USMA

Central Intelligence Agency
Deputy Director for Intelligence

US Army Concepts Analysis Agency
Director

Army Library

Defense Technical Information Center

US Army War College Library

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER ACN 86005	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) Soviet Strategic Military Interests in Africa in the 1980s		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Final Report
7. AUTHOR(s) Dr. Richard B. Remnek		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Strategic Studies Institute US Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBER
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		12. REPORT DATE 1 May 1986
		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 29
		15. SECURITY CLASS (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) USSR; Africa; war scenarios; Soviet naval support facilities; Soviet military aid.		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) In this study, the author identifies what role Africa--its territory, resources, and surrounding waters--may play in the Soviet peacetime preparation for, and prosecution of, a general coalition war as well as in regional crises outside Africa. This effort is essential for understanding the nature of the Soviet threat to the West in Africa. The author argues that although Soviet military interests in Africa have been limited, they have nevertheless worked to distort Soviet policy (continued)		

DD FORM 1 JAN 73 1473

EDITION OF 1 NOV 65 IS OBSOLETE

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE(When Data Entered)

in the Horn of Africa during the past decade. He recommends that the focus of US concern about the Soviet military threat in Africa should be on capabilities and intentions to support Soviet strategic bombing missions and suggests, when feasible, pressure should be applied to restrict Soviet development and use of African military facilities for strategic purposes.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE(When Data Entered)

END

DT/C

8-86